

April 7, 2020

FAQs: Health, Safety and Travel during COVID-19 Response in Guatemala

[Table of Contents](#)

1. General Information about the situation in Guatemala during the COVID-19 crisis	2
What restrictions are currently in place in Guatemala in response to COVID-19?	2
Is a curfew in effect in Guatemala? If so, what are the rules?	4
Are all borders and airports closed in Guatemala?	4
Can I travel by land within Guatemala?	5
Can I travel by air within Guatemala?	5
Where can I find information about international flights to/from Guatemala?	5
Should I try to cross into Mexico and fly to U.S. from there?	5
Where can I find all alerts published by the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala related to the COVID-19 crisis?	6
Where can I find health information about COVID-19?	6
What should I do if my 90-day authorization (tourist visa) to remain in Guatemala expired?	6
If I go back to the U.S. will I be quarantined?	7
2. Air travel options not coordinated by the Department of State	7
3. Charter flights organized by the Department of State	8
Is the U.S. Embassy organizing charter flights for U.S. citizens?	8
Should I try to book a flight on a non-U.S. Government charter flight?	9
How will the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala communicate with me?	9
4. Resources	9
Where can I get more information?	9
Where do I find information published by the Government of Guatemala?	10

1. General Information about the situation in Guatemala during the COVID-19 crisis

What restrictions are currently in place in Guatemala in response to COVID-19?

Recently the Guatemalan government has taken expanded measures aimed at protecting the health and safety of all persons in Guatemala, including U.S. citizens. The U.S. Embassy requests that all U.S. citizens in Guatemala abide by the official policies of the Guatemalan government and follow official updates by both the Guatemalan government and the U.S. Embassy.

Several of the official measures implemented by the Guatemalan government that impact U.S. citizens currently in Guatemala are explained here:

- 1. State of calamity (*Estado de calamidad*)**
- 2. Closing of borders (*Cierre de fronteras*)**
- 3. National curfew (*Toque de queda*)**
- 4. Closure of beaches, lakes and rivers**
- 5. Additional Department and Municipality-Level Restrictions**

State of Calamity (*Estado de calamidad*)

The Guatemalan government declared a “state of calamity” on March 5 and then extended the expiration of this declaration to May 5. Declaring a “state of calamity” allows the Guatemalan government to take exceptional measures to protect national security (similar to a “state of emergency” in the United States). Under a state of calamity, the Guatemalan government can authorize specific actions, such as border closures and curfew (explained below). For updates related to the state of calamity, we refer you to the Guatemalan government:

<https://twitter.com/GuatemalaGob>

Closing of Borders (*Cierre de fronteras*)

The Guatemalan government is currently barring entry to most non-Guatemalans (with certain specific exceptions for health and security) by land, sea, and air borders. The U.S. Embassy continues to work with the Guatemalan government to permit departure of certain flights for U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents from Guatemalan airspace to the United States. The Guatemalan government can adjust its policy on national border closings at any time. We refer you to the Guatemalan Immigration Office for updated information on national borders:

<https://twitter.com/MigracionGuate>

Curfew (*Toque de queda*)

Under its declaration of a state of calamity, the Guatemalan government also instituted a

nationwide curfew currently effective through April 12. The curfew lasts from 4:00 p.m. to 4:00 a.m. each day. Every individual in Guatemala — including U.S. citizens — is required to remain inside their domicile during curfew hours (with exceptions for health, security, and some delivery services). The Guatemalan government may extend the deadline of the curfew at any time. The U.S. Embassy reminds U.S. citizens in Guatemala that they are expected to obey the curfew, which is being enforced by Guatemalan law enforcement. Violators of the curfew restrictions risk arrest, more information at the webpage of the Ministry of Governance: <https://mingob.gob.gt/pnc-continua-deteniendo-a-personas-que-incumplen-el-toque-de-queda/>

The Government of Guatemala imposed additional social distancing restrictions during Holy Week (Semana Santa). These new restrictions are in addition to the ones that were already in place. Starting Sunday, April 5 at 4:00 p.m. to Sunday, April 12 at 11:59 p.m., all travel between departments is prohibited.

The sale, purchase, and public consumption of alcoholic beverages is also prohibited from Monday, April 6 at 12:00 a.m. until Monday, April 13 at 6:00 a.m.

All U.S. citizens in Guatemala are expected to obey these restrictions. For more information on the guidelines provided by the Government of Guatemala visit: <https://legal.dca.gob.gt/>

Closure of beaches, lakes, and rivers

On April 2, the Government of Guatemala announced that all visits to beaches, lakes and rivers in the country are prohibited. This measure is aimed at preventing crowds during Holy Week (Semana Santa), that takes place from April 5 to April 12. Closures apply 24 hours a day and are not limited to curfew hours.

U.S. Embassy Guatemala COVID-19 updates: <https://gt.usembassy.gov/alert-covid-19-2/>

More information available in the April 7 *Diario de Centro América* (official Government of Guatemala publication): <https://legal.dca.gob.gt/Content/PDF/DocumentoDelDiaPdf.pdf>

Ministry of Governance: <https://mingob.gob.gt/> and <https://www.facebook.com/mingobguate/>

Additional Department and Municipality-Level Restrictions

Beyond the national-level restrictions mentioned above, different municipalities within the country may adopt additional restrictive measures on travel and outdoor activities. Please monitor local news reports to receive the latest information. American Citizens in need of immediate assistance should contact the Guatemalan Tourism Institute (INGUAT)'s Tourist Assistance Program (PROATUR) through its website <http://proatur.visitguatemala.com/es/noticias.php> or by dialing 1500.

Is a curfew in effect in Guatemala? If so, what are the rules?

The Government of Guatemala established a national curfew, effective March 24 to April 12. Every individual in Guatemala – including U.S. citizens – is required to remain inside their domicile between 4:00 p.m. and 4:00 a.m. daily. Most businesses must close. There are exceptions for health, security, and some delivery services. The U.S. Embassy reminds U.S. citizens in Guatemala that they are expected to obey the curfew, which is being enforced by Guatemalan law enforcement. Violators of the curfew restriction risk arrest, more information at the webpage of the Ministry of Governance: <https://mingob.gob.gt/pnc-continua-deteniendo-a-personas-que-incumplen-el-toque-de-queda/>

The sale, purchase, and public consumption of alcoholic beverages will also be prohibited from Monday, April 6 at 12:00 a.m. until Monday, April 13 at 6:00 a.m.

See question 1 in Section 1 of this document for additional information on restrictions to movement.

U.S. Embassy Guatemala COVID-19 updates: <https://gt.usembassy.gov/alert-covid-19-2/>

Diario de Centro America (Official Government publication) from April 7: <https://legal.dca.gob.gt/Content/PDF/DocumentoDelDiaPdf.pdf>

Ministry of Governance: <https://mingob.gob.gt/> and <https://www.facebook.com/mingobguate/>

Are all borders and airports closed in Guatemala?

Starting March 5, the Government of Guatemala began taking steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19 by restricting travel to and from Guatemala. As of March 17, regular commercial flights were suspended. The Guatemalan government may reassess this decision at any time. Most land borders are also closed but only Guatemalan authorities can provide the latest information.

The Government of Guatemala is the authority that determines entry and exit from the country. We refer you to the links below for the most recent information.

Guatemalan Immigration Office (Instituto Guatemalteco de Migración): <http://igm.gob.gt/>

Government of Guatemala: <https://www.guatemala.gob.gt/>

U.S. Embassy Guatemala COVID-19 updates: <https://gt.usembassy.gov/alert-covid-19-2/>

See Section 2 of this document for guidance on travel options for departing Guatemala.

Can I travel by land within Guatemala?

Public transport is not currently operating due to Government restrictions. For more information on the prohibition to travel outside of the department of your residence during Holy Week (*Semana Santa*) (April 5 – April 13) see Section 1 of this document.

For specific questions about safety and viability of land travel, contact the Guatemalan Agency for Tourist Assistance (PROATUR): <http://proatur.visitguatemala.com/en/safety-tips.php?lang=EN> or dial (502) 2421 2810.

There are reports that some local Guatemalan communities are taking unofficial action to restrict individuals from entering or exiting their communities in an attempt to prevent the spread of COVID-19. In some cases, non-Guatemalan citizens have been prevented from entering or leaving a community — or upon leaving, are not allowed to return. Several reports in this regard have come from communities surrounding Lake Atitlán. If any U.S. citizen feels they are in danger, they should call Guatemalan law enforcement at 120, 122, or 123 (the equivalent of “911” in the United States) and the U.S. Embassy (502) 2326 4000 to report the situation. For more information and updates, please call the Guatemalan tourism police at 1500 or visit the Guatemalan Tourist Authority: <http://proatur.visitguatemala.com/en/safety-tips.php?lang=EN>

Can I travel by air within Guatemala?

You can find information about domestic flight availability and airports through the Guatemalan Agency for Civil Aviation (DGAC) at <http://www.dgac.gob.gt/index.php>. Please remember that all travel, including travel to and from airports to homes or hotels, would have to occur outside of curfew hours (currently 4:00 p.m. to 4:00 a.m. until April 12) and in compliance with restrictions on travel between departments. See the first question in Section 1 of this document for more information.

Where can I find information about international flights to/from Guatemala?

Although international flights are currently not operating normally, information can be found at the Guatemalan Agency for Civil Aviation (DGAC) at <http://www.dgac.gob.gt/index.php>.

Should I try to cross into Mexico and fly to U.S. from there?

The Guatemalan government is currently allowing foreign travelers to exit via land border crossing into Mexico, and Mexico is currently allowing them to enter. Some private tour operators are operating transport to these border crossings. Many travelers have also taken private taxis or other methods of transport to the Mexican border.

The U.S. Embassy does not recommend this option as it is not guaranteed that traveling by land

out of Guatemala will result in successful return to the United States, or that it is safe to do so. For the past year Embassy personnel have not been allowed to conduct personal travel in Huehuetenango or San Marcos (where the Tecún Umán border crossing is located) due to security concerns. Additionally, given the fluid nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, border passage and flight availability in Mexico could change at any time. All travelers considering exiting Guatemala by land should research travel and security advisories (available at www.travel.state.gov) for all portions of their planned route, as well as the CDC's COVID-19 country health guides (available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/map-and-travel-notice.html>).

See the first question in Section 1 of this document for more information about restrictions prohibiting travel between departments.

U.S. Embassy in Mexico

Website: <https://mx.usembassy.gov/>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/mexico.usembassy>

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/USEmbassyMex>

Where can I find all alerts published by the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala related to the COVID-19 crisis?

U.S. Embassy in Guatemala

Website: <https://gt.usembassy.gov>

<https://gt.usembassy.gov/alert-covid-19/>

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/usembassyguate>

Facebook: <http://facebook.com/embajada.eeuu.guatemala>

Where can I find health information about COVID-19?

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/>

Guatemalan Ministry of Health: <https://www.mspas.gob.gt/>

Public hospitals in Guatemala: <https://www.mspas.gob.gt/index.php/servicios/webs-de-hospitals>

General information on medical assistance: <https://gt.usembassy.gov/u-s-citizen-services/doctors/>

What should I do if my 90-day authorization (tourist visa) to remain in Guatemala expired?

The Instituto Guatemalteco de Migración (Guatemalan immigration office) announced on April 6, 2020 that non-Guatemalans who entered Guatemala legally using a tourist visa, but who are unable to depart due to the travel restrictions put in place by the Guatemalan government in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, will be allowed to remain in Guatemala in legal status until the travel restrictions are lifted, even if their 90-day authorization to remain in Guatemala has lapsed at that time.

Non-Guatemalans whose 90-day status lapsed before March 5, 2020 and who are unlawfully present in Guatemala must be processed at the Instituto Guatemalteco de Migración in Guatemala City to resolve their status.

For additional information, please contact the Instituto Guatemalteco de Migración or at (502) 2411-2411. Refer to the Acuerdo de Autoridad Migratoria Nacional No. 3-2018 which provides a complete fee schedule.

See message posted by U.S. Embassy Guatemala on April 6:
<https://gt.usembassy.gov/information-for-u-s-citizens-in-guatemala-regarding-visa-status/>

If I go back to the U.S. will I be quarantined?

Visit the Department of Homeland Security (<https://www.dhs.gov/>) and Department of Health and Human Services (<https://www.hhs.gov/>) for the latest information for individuals entering the United States.

2. Air travel options not coordinated by the Department of State

There are no additional State Department charter flights planned from Guatemala City to the United States; however, the U.S. Embassy continues to work with commercial carriers and the Government of Guatemala to explore all possible options to help U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents return home. **We have no confirmation of if/when additional commercial flights may be scheduled.** It is important to take advantage of any commercial opportunities now or be prepared to remain in Guatemala for an indefinite period.

Please note, prices are set by the carriers, not the U.S. Government.

The U.S. Embassy would like to emphasize Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's recent message to U.S. citizens currently outside the United States:

“We do not know in some countries how long the continued commercial flights in your country may continue to operate. We can’t guarantee the U.S. Government’s ability to arrange chartered flights indefinitely...”

“Americans abroad who wish to return home [to the United States] should do so immediately and make arrangements to accomplish that.”

We urge U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents wishing to travel to the United States to contact commercial airlines directly to make a booking.

Please also continue to monitor U.S. Embassy online accounts for updated information:

U.S. Embassy in Guatemala

Website: <https://gt.usembassy.gov>

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/usembassyguate>

Facebook: <http://facebook.com/embajada.eeuu.guatemala>

3. Charter flights organized by the Department of State

Is the U.S. Embassy organizing charter flights for U.S. citizens?

The last scheduled State Department-coordinated charter flights from Guatemala City to Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) departed on March, 31. From March 23-31, the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala coordinated 12 charter flights, from La Aurora Airport to Dallas-Fort Worth, evacuating 1,900 U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents. At this time, we do not expect additional State Department charter flights will be made available.

We urge U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents wishing to return to the United States to continue to check the availability of commercial flights and contact airlines directly to make a booking. See Section 2 of this document.

As we do not anticipate additional State Department charter flights will be available, we have closed the Embassy’s online data entry form and will not be taking additional registrations. Information already collected by the Embassy will not be retained. For any possible U.S. Government-coordinated flights in the future, the U.S. Embassy will provide instructions regarding its registration process at that time. However, as we do not anticipate that this will likely become an option, we urge travelers to continue to seek commercial flight options from Guatemala City to the United States.

Please contact AmcitsGuatemala@state.gov for any urgent inquiries.

U.S. Embassy Guatemala alerts for U.S citizens related to COVID-19 are posted here:
<https://gt.usembassy.gov/alert-covid-19/>

Should I try to book a flight on a non-U.S. Government charter flight?

Yes. See Section 2 of this document.

How will the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala communicate with me?

U.S. Embassy email addresses end in “@state.gov.”

Please contact AmcitsGuatemala@state.gov for any urgent inquiries.

4. Resources

Where can I get more information?

Embassy website: <https://gt.usembassy.gov>,

Covid-19 updates: <https://gt.usembassy.gov/alert-covid-19/>

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/usembassyguate>

Facebook: <http://facebook.com/embajada.eeuu.guatemala>

Phone: (502) 2326 4000

American Citizens email: Amcitsguatemala@state.gov

State Department’s Global Level 4 Health Travel Advisory: www.travel.state.gov.

What the Department of State can and cannot do during a crisis:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/emergencies/what-state-dept-cant-do-crisis.html>

Consult the CDC (<https://www.cdc.gov/>)website for the most up-to-date information. For the most recent information on what you can do to reduce your risk of contracting COVID-19 please see the CDC’s latest recommendations at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fprepare%2Fprevention.html

Visit the COVID-19 crisis page on travel.state.gov for the latest information:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/ea/covid-19-information.html>

Check with your airlines, cruise lines, or travel operators regarding any updated information about your travel plans and/or restrictions.

Visit the Department of Homeland Security (<https://www.dhs.gov/>) on the latest travel restrictions to the U.S.

Monitor local news for updates.

Where do I find information published by the Government of Guatemala?

Guatemalan Government (Information in Spanish)

Website: <https://www.guatemala.gob.gt/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/guatemalagob/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/GuatemalaGob>

PROATUR (Tourist Assistance Program) (information in English)

Part of the Guatemalan Official Tourism Agency **INGUAT**

Phone: 1500 / 2421-2810

Website: <http://proatur.visitguatemala.com/en/about-proatur.php>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/VisitGuatemala>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/visitguatemala>

INGUAT (Official Tourism Agency) (information in Spanish)

Phone: 1517 / 1540

Website: <http://inguat.gob.gt/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/inguat/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/InguatPrensa>

Ministry of Government

Website: <https://mingob.gob.gt/>

Phone: 1517 / 1540

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/mingobguate/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/mingobguate>